

VZCZCXRO4053
PP RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHVC
DE RUEHHK #2055 2192322
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 072322Z AUG 07
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2511
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 002055

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

NSC FOR DENNIS WILDER
DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/CM, DRL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/07/2032
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [ELAB](#) [PREL](#) [CH](#) [HK](#) [MC](#)
SUBJECT: U.S. CASINO EXECUTIVES NOT PRESSURED TO HIRE LOCAL
SECURITY STAFF

REF: HONG KONG 01203

Classified By: Acting E/P Section Chief Jeff Zaiser; Reasons 1.4 (b, d)

¶1. (SBU) On August 5, Hong Kong's "South China Morning Post" (SCMP) carried a story and an editorial citing rumors that "senior Macau government officials" have pressured executives in the U.S.-owned Venetian Macau hotel and casino, currently under construction and due to open on August 28, 2007, to fill security positions from the local talent pool, rather than expatriates, lest Western casinos risk the "goodwill" of Macau. The SCMP also reported that Norman MacKillop, a two-year veteran as the "head of security" for the Venetian Macau, was dismissed in May, and that the Venetian rescinded the contracts of two other decorated former Hong Kong police officers in an apparent case of politically-motivated discrimination. The reporter compared this alleged anti-foreigner sentiment to the public resentment of job losses to foreigners that played a role in the recent May Day protest in Macau, during which police fired shots into the air (reftel).

¶2. (C) In response to our inquiry, James Lisle (protect), the director for corporate investigations at the Wynn Macau, characterized the report as "utter nonsense." The authorities in Macau rigorously screen all senior security officials working in casinos in Macau, he said, including those that are U.S.-owned, and issued each officer a "blue card" (akin to a badge for private security work); thus, the Macau government has direct control over the licensing of each position. Lisle also said that if the Macau government, which he characterized as historically "non-interventionist" in the process, wanted to tamper with the ethnic composition of Western casino security staff, it would have done so in the licensing phase rather than resort to the relatively tenuous approach of trying to coerce casino managers. Lisle also told poloff, "off the record," that he frequently socialized with Macau police and Commission Against Corruption officers, and that they had ample opportunities to "make their pitch over beer" but that they never expressed concern over the presence of Western security officers.
Marut